



Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7149th meeting

Thursday, 27 March 2014, 3 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Ms. Lucas	(Luxembourg)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Mr. Quinalan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Errázuriz
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Kazragienė
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Republic of Korea	Ms. Paik Ji-ah
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2110 (2013) (S/2014/190)

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2014/191)

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14-27874 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2110 (2013) (S/2014/190)

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2014/191)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/190, which contains the second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2110 (2013). I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/191, which contains the second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013).

I now give the floor to Mr. Mladenov.

Mr. Mladenov: I am honoured to present to the Council today two reports of the Secretary-General. The first report is pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2110 (2013) (S/2014/190) on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the most recent developments in Iraq. The second report is pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2014/191).

During my last briefing (see S/PV.7068), I stressed that Iraq's future cannot be considered in isolation from the broader challenges that the region is facing. As divisions continue to plague Iraqi politics, the ongoing conflict in Syria has added a regional dimension to sectarian tensions and is affording terrorist networks the occasion to forge links across the border and expand

their support base. The situation is further compounded by unresolved constitutional issues that constantly bring to the fore the existing tensions between Iraq's communities. All that makes for a fragile and explosive combination.

Today more than ever, Iraq's political, civic and religious leaders have the responsibility and duty to promote national unity so as to engage all Iraqis as stakeholders in the construction of a democratic future for their country. Participants in that endeavour will not only have to brave the threats of rising violence from terrorist activities, they will also have to acknowledge the need for compromises on pressing matters related to the national budget and revenue sharing.

The need for unity is currently most visible in Anbar governorate, from which the most serious threat to the security of the country emanates. That threat is beginning to affect other parts of the country. The country's security is strained by well-armed and well-trained terrorist groups with access to substantial financial resources. Their goal is clear: to establish a permanent foothold beyond the control of the authorities and to consolidate a base for the expansion of their operations. They exploit divisions and weaknesses in Iraqi society and want to ultimately make the country ungovernable.

Over the past few weeks, the capital of Anbar governorate, the city of Ramadi, has returned to Government control. Although isolated pockets of fighting remain, the local authorities and the security forces face the difficult task of clearing out buildings and securing roads that have been booby-trapped with sophisticated explosives by the terrorists. Those traps have considerably slowed down the process of return for those families who want to go back to their properties.

The situation in the city of Fallujah, which remains under the control of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and other armed groups remains a source of concern. The city is surrounded by Iraqi security forces. Civilian casualties and sporadic shelling of neighbourhoods and civilian have been reported. Indeed, on at least one occasion, shelling hit the general hospital. Many people have fled. However, large numbers of residents remain trapped inside the city, with nowhere to go and limited, if any, access to food and basic services.

Since the beginning of the crisis, I have called on the Government of Iraq to exercise restraint in taking

military or paramilitary action and to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of civilian life and property. I welcome the assurances provided by the Prime Minister of Iraq that Iraqi security forces will not enter the city and that the Government is seeking a political solution that would allow the legitimate authorities to return to Fallujah. The United Nations is also closely following all attempts to broker a peaceful solution.

Since the beginning of the crisis, I have also engaged in intensive meetings with leaders from across the spectrum of Iraqi politics. In all meetings, I have stressed that, while the United Nations will support Iraq's fight against terrorism, the challenges facing the people of Iraq cannot be resolved without dialogue and concessions.

While a security response is necessary to tackle the threat of armed groups and terrorists, a range of strategies is needed to successfully address the conditions that enable terrorist activity. The protection and advancement of human rights, equality before the law and the inclusion of those who feel marginalized will become central in any political resolution in the future. Those messages were boosted by the timely visit of the Secretary-General in January, during which he stressed the need for unity and a holistic approach to the problem of violence in Iraq.

The Government of Iraq has furthermore attempted to resolve the crisis on the basis of a 14-point plan to restore stability and security in Anbar. The plan has put in motion a process that aims to build confidence among federal, provincial and local actors and establish strategic cooperation on the ground. It offers a time-bound cessation of hostilities and an amnesty period for insurgents who are not affiliated with the terrorist groups. Another key feature is the boosting of provincial police resources through the recruitment of approximately 10,000 local tribal members. The Government has also decided to allocate new funding in order to compensate families and communities who have been most affected by the fighting and to support development projects in Anbar.

Less than a month after the plan's adoption, 5,000 tribal members from Anbar and an additional 7,000 local Anbar residents have already been recruited, while 1,940 displaced families have received funding. However, the cessation of hostilities was short-lived, underscoring the nature of the threat facing Iraq and its neighbours.

The signs are not promising for an early resolution of the crisis. The United Nations continues to closely follow all attempts to find a peaceful solution. All our interlocutors in Baghdad and Erbil expressed their support for the United Nations as an impartial and trusted partner.

In such a volatile situation, the United Nations primary concern has been to provide lifesaving assistance to those displaced by the fighting. Three months of fighting has led to the displacement of over 66,000 families, which represents just over 400,000 people. Many remain trapped in areas of active conflict. The intensity and nature of the fighting is significantly constraining regular access by the United Nations and other humanitarian actors to those affected.

Despite the difficult circumstances, the United Nations is delivering assistance where it can and recently accessed areas that were previously unreachable. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Government of Iraq, provincial authorities, Iraqi security forces and our local partners and national staff who have made that possible. Unfortunately, with many stocks drawn from our reserves in Iraq, our own and our partners' resources are diminishing rapidly.

Let me be absolutely clear: without securing additional funding, the United Nations will very soon be unable to continue its humanitarian assistance to those fleeing the fighting in Anbar. I am aware that a number of Governments have indicated their willingness to consider co-funding on the condition that the Government of Iraq contribute to the \$103.7 million strategic response plan, which we put forward and launched earlier in March. Given the compelling humanitarian needs, the capacity of the United Nations and its partners and the impartiality of the assistance provided through the United Nations, I call on the Government of Iraq and the international community to urgently support the strategic response plan.

The Anbar crisis poses the most serious challenge to the Government of Iraq's efforts to maintain the very stability and security needed for building a democratic State. Since the onset of the crisis in late December 2013, the Council of Representatives, for example, has witnessed boycotts by three of its largest blocs. That has resulted in the Council's inability to secure a quorum for the majority of its meetings. It has also brought the entire legislative process to a halt during this critical time.

The approval of the federal budget law has emerged as a significant challenge. It has been affected by unresolved negotiations between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government on oil-export rights and the sharing of revenues derived from oil products. The situation escalated when the budget transfer to the Kurdistan Regional Government was halted in February.

To resolve the budget dispute, both the federal and regional Governments engaged with each other through the exchange of official and technical visits, as further delays in the budget law could very soon place serious constraints on the federal Government's spending, including in areas of delivering services. I have extended my good offices to facilitate that dialogue in order to reach a robust and transparent agreement on the equitable distribution of budget allocations derived, in part, from oil and gas exports.

I would like to welcome the vital and constructive engagement by the United States in facilitating an interim arrangement that would now allow for the negotiations to continue, with the goal of adopting the 2014 budget with the agreement of all components of Iraqi society.

Under that interim arrangement, I further welcome the decision of the Kurdistan Regional Government to begin exporting 100,000 barrels of oil per day through Iraq's existing pipeline network to Turkey without preconditions. To build on that first step, experts from the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government should meet soon to assess future month-to-month export targets based on technical capacities and in a manner consistent with the Iraqi Constitution.

Both the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government have taken steps that should allow for progress to be made on all outstanding issues related to the management of the hydrocarbon sector and revenue sharing, as required by the Constitution. I take this opportunity to once again urge all parties to work in a spirit of compromise with the goal of quickly resolving all issues related to the approval of the 2014 federal budget law. UNAMI stands ready to assist in that process.

In just over a month, on 30 April, Iraqis are scheduled to head to the polls to choose their national representatives. It will be Iraq's third national election under the 2005 Constitution, and it is likely to be its most contested race to date. On the same day, voters in

the Kurdistan region will also choose their governorate council representatives.

I am pleased to report that technical preparations are on track, including the distribution of approximately 75 per cent of the new electronic voter registration cards. In addition, security arrangements are being put in place for the elections. Those preparations cover areas of the Anbar governorate that are accessible to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and its officials.

UNAMI continues to provide technical advice to the Commission. In addition, we have embedded a staff member within the Commission who will work to ensure that voters reach voting centres as safely as possible. UNAMI is also working with the IHEC to ensure that the displaced residents of Anbar can take part in the elections.

However, there are concerning reports of the security situation in some parts of Diyala and Baghdad governorates, where, according to some sources, armed groups or militias may have targeted and intimidated the local population. I call upon the Government of Iraq to ensure that security returns to those provinces and that such allegations are investigated. All communities should be able to freely participate in the forthcoming elections. Indeed, they should be encouraged to do so. As such, we are confident that, from a technical perspective, the two elections can take place on time. The IHEC is also conducting a large-scale out-of-country voting operation, which will include 19 countries and will allow Iraqis living abroad to register and vote in the general elections.

Over the past few days, some controversy has emerged over the decision of the Electoral Judicial Panel to disqualify certain candidates from participating in the election. Most recently, the IHEC commissioners submitted their resignations, allegedly over political pressure being exerted on their work. I reiterate my full support for the independence and integrity of the Independent High Electoral Commission. The Commission's independence is guaranteed by the Constitution, and I call on all political entities to protect its integrity.

The Commission has demonstrated a high level of professionalism. It has the technical capacity to organize the forthcoming elections, and there is no reason to delay them. I would like to commend its efforts to establish the necessary procedures to ensure

the effective participation and representation of women in the electoral process, and urge it to continue its work. All concerns should be handled within the Constitution and the legal process. The people of Iraq must not be prevented from voting and choosing their representatives on 30 April. Any delay for political or other reasons will set a dangerous precedent for the country.

A transparent and credible election is one of the pillars of democracy. I want to take this opportunity to encourage the people of Iraq to vote and to make an informed choice on the basis of strong political platforms that promote a harmonious and cohesive society that represents all religious and ethnic affiliations. I appeal to the political parties to focus their platforms on the future, not the past. The people of Iraq deserve the opportunity to make a free choice for the future to which they aspire.

On this occasion, I would also like to call on the political leaders of the Kurdistan region to work together and to finalize the formation of the Kurdistan Regional Government after the successful elections in September 2013.

Iraq continues to implement the death penalty. In 2013, 177 Iraqis were executed, followed by another 50 this year. I wish to reiterate the Secretary-General's call for Iraq to consider a moratorium on all executions, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and international conventions. Such international instruments have defined the standards governing the use and implementation of the death penalty. Those standards also require that no person who was under the age of 18 at the time the crime was committed should be executed. Iraq currently has two men on death row who were under 18 when the crimes for which they have been convicted were perpetrated.

I would now like to address the issue of the residents of the temporary transit location at Camp Hurriya. To date, 356 residents have been relocated outside Iraq, with the largest number being accepted in Albania and Germany.

I welcome the appointment of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the relocation of the residents, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, as a positive step for engagement with the international community on finding relocation countries. I commend the recent steps taken by the United States, including a recent decision to resettle a number of those residents in the

United States, as well as to provide \$1 million in seed funding to the United Nations multi-donor funded project — the trust fund, as it is known — to support their resettlement and integration in third countries. I also call on the Government of Iraq to ensure that all security and humanitarian arrangements are provided for the Camp Hurriya residents in accordance with the signed memorandum of understanding.

On a separate note, I would like to mention that the Mission continues to face some operational challenges due to the absence of a status-of-mission agreement 10 years after the Mission's establishment. I want to reiterate our call to the Government of Iraq to swiftly support the finalization, signing and entry into force of the status-of-mission agreement without further delay.

The United Nations plays an important role in Iraq in promoting political dialogue and human rights, as well as in engaging in the development agenda. I would like to thank the United Nations country team and our partners in the Iraqi Government for finalizing a new United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Iraq for the period 2015 to 2019. While it will continue to provide the basis for development assistance, it should also support efforts to enhance social cohesion in the country.

The people of Iraq are tired of war and confrontation. They want to reconstruct their country and use their wealth to the benefit of all. They need to build thousands of schools to prepare their children for the future, and to invest in a modern health-care system. They need an independent judiciary and a modern public administration. They need a vibrant civil society and a dynamic private sector. They aspire to uproot corruption and sectarianism. No one in Iraq would disagree that those are the long-term challenges that everyone in the country faces in seeking Iraq's social, political and economic development. Everyone welcomes the role of the United Nations in supporting Iraq's critical transition.

The people of Iraq look to UNAMI to be an impartial partner and expect the United Nations country team to bring forward international experience and expertise to assist their difficult transition to democracy. They also look to the Security Council to continue to guide us in an united manner.

I now wish to briefly turn to and present the second report of the Secretary-General on the issues of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing

Kuwaiti property, including its national archives, pursuant to resolution 2107 (2013).

I visited Kuwait for the first time in my capacity as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on 17 and 18 March. I had the honour to meet His Highness the Emir, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and the Emir's adviser, as well as the National Committee for Missing Persons and Prisoners of War Affairs. I was very gratified to see the Kuwaiti leadership's strong wish for stability in Iraq. The Emir and others made it clear that they desired nothing less for Iraq than peace, stability and prosperity.

It is therefore comforting that my political deputy, Ambassador Gyorgy Busztin, carries out his duties as the overseer of that mandate against the very conducive backdrop of strong Iraq-Kuwait ties. During the reporting period, UNAMI served as an observer to Iraq's two interministerial bodies on missing Kuwaiti nationals and property. We note the sincerity and resolve of the Iraqis. However, it is with much regret that, despite the sincerity, time and effort that Iraq continues to invest in that humanitarian endeavour, I can report no new results with regard to the issue of missing persons.

Kuwait's National Committee for Missing Persons and Prisoners of War Affairs is seriously concerned that, with each passing day, the search for those missing becomes harder. Those in possession of information may become more removed and inaccessible. Despite the lack of progress during the past decade, the Committee members demonstrate an admirable sense of purpose and resolve. I have the highest respect for the Committee and for the families of the missing. The Committee joins UNAMI in approaching the issue, including missing Iraqis on its soil, as a humanitarian task.

Loss and pain clearly transcend nationalities. Any family with a missing member, be they Iraqi or Kuwaiti, would relate to the grief and pain of the other. As I wonder about what has sustained those families who have no knowledge or information of their loved ones, I realize that it is their unyielding hope that keeps them going, even though no remains have been found since 2004.

I believe that there are a number of ways in which UNAMI can assist on that issue, including through adopting a new local approach to searching

for information, maintaining the spotlight on that very important and sensitive humanitarian issue and assessing how it could best assist in the search for useful information from a wider circle of potential sources.

Needless to say, I am also pleased that 100,000 books, academic theses and other objects belonging to Kuwait have been found and collected in recent months. UNAMI has suggested for the two property committees to convene in the near future and for Iraq to use the occasion to return Kuwaiti belongings. I believe that those meetings between the two property committees should happen on a more regular basis in order not only to build understanding and empathy between the two sides but also to devise practical means of achieving a breakthrough on the national archives.

On the question of the national archives, I would also like to express my disappointment that not a single lead has emerged so far. UNAMI is working very closely with the Government of Iraq to assess existing archival arrangements.

As Iraq completes its payment of compensation to Kuwait, in 2015, I would very much welcome the opportunity to be able to announce progress on the issue of the missing Kuwaiti nationals and property. I am convinced that is Iraq's wish as much as Kuwait's. On behalf of UNAMI, I would like to assure the Council that we will do everything in our ability to make that happen. I am more than ever convinced that the outstanding humanitarian issue of the missing Kuwaiti nationals, as well as of missing property, including the national archives, must be brought to closure without further delay so that the two countries can definitively turn the page.

With the support of Member States, UNAMI will continue to assist the people and the Government of Iraq in implementing the Mission's mandate. I thank the Government and people of Iraq for their cooperation. I especially wish to thank our staff, national and international, as well as the Secretariat, for their dedication, without which our mission would be impossible. I also wish to place on record my deep gratitude to the Security Council for its continued support.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Mladenov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Albakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Luxembourg on its

assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and for its considerable efforts and excellent organization of the Council's work in a very busy month, thereby setting an example of the effective role that non-permanent members of the Council can play. I am also pleased to welcome Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and to thank him for his briefing highlighting his team's efforts to achieve the mission's mandate and objectives in assisting Iraq at this delicate stage.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's most recent report to the Council (S/2014/190), our citizens in Anbar province have been subjected for months to a vicious attack conducted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. That group, which is affiliated with the Al-Qaida terrorist organization, has infiltrated and ravaged Ramadi and Fallujah, blocking roads, terrorizing citizens and committing massacres against civilians. The Iraqi armed forces, in cooperation and coordination with tribes of the region and the local police, have confronted the terrorists, expelled them and regained control over most of the areas outside the cities where they were based.

Out of concern for the lives of civilians, Iraqi forces have refrained from setting off a military confrontation in Fallujah. They have besieged the city to prevent terrorists from escaping and have sought the help of local authorities in confronting terrorists in order to minimize civilian losses and abide by international humanitarian law. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Government, in coordination with UNAMI, has provided assistance to the affected citizens in Anbar province who were displaced from the areas that were targeted by terrorist organizations. It has also helped them to return to their homes while moving forward with its operations in Anbar.

Our bitter experience over the past few years has taught us that mere military confrontation will not stop terrorism or resolve the issue of the factional, ethnic and regional divisions that are being exploited by violent terrorism. We are therefore working to end the causes of discontent and frustration that the terrorists are exploiting. To that end, Iraq has adopted a comprehensive multifaceted strategy for a constitutional system of Government to ensure that all sectors of society benefit from economic development. In the past few months, we have also allocated an economic

assistance package worth \$1 billion for rebuilding and developing Anbar province.

In the past few years, Iraq has been dealing with vicious and wide-scale attacks from terrorist organizations aimed at derailing the country's political process and institutions through indiscriminate killing, which affects all Iraqi communities and groups. As terrorism knows no borders, it will spread unless it is checked. In mid-March, Iraq hosted 50 States and organizations participating in the first Baghdad International Counter-Terrorism Conference, in an effort to eliminate a scourge that has caused Iraq significant suffering. We mobilized every means possible for that effort. In his statement to the Conference, Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki stated that Iraq had repeatedly warned of the spread of terrorism and extremism and that their continued existence in Iraq and Syria would eventually lead to their spread throughout the region and around the world — terrorism knows no borders and no State is immune to its threat. The Prime Minister also called on the international community to cooperate in combating terrorism. In that regard, we would like to express our thanks to the Security Council for supporting the efforts of the Iraqi Government in fighting terrorism through its most recent presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/1).

We would also like to thank the Head of the European Union delegation in Iraq, Ms. Jana Hybášková, who, in her statement at the opening of the Baghdad Conference, said that the European Union's 28 States members supported Iraq's ongoing efforts against terrorism. She also called on States to mobilize and take speedy deterrent measures, such as security and intelligence coordination among the countries of the region, with a view to dismantling terrorist networks, and to work collectively to cut off terrorism's financing sources, impose sanctions and ban activities promoting terrorist ideologies. We are fighting terrorism on behalf of all those present here. We therefore look forward to the Council's constructive and systematic assistance in preventing the spread of terrorism and, ultimately, eliminating it.

Three years ago, we said that the absence of a solution to the conflict in Syria would lead to the expansion of terrorist organizations' activities in the region. Terrorism eventually reached Iraq and other neighbouring countries, and it continues to spread as the second Geneva Conference on Syria has failed. From this Chamber, we would like to reaffirm the

urgent need for finding a political solution to the Syrian tragedy, which, according to many observers, has become the worst of this century.

In spite of the security challenges Iraq faces and the difficult humanitarian situation in Anbar, we are currently hosting more than a quarter million Syrian nationals. We would therefore like to appeal to the Security Council to punish States that allow terrorist fighters to mobilize in their territories and force them into other countries, in a dirty war against humanity, stability and development.

The security and humanitarian difficulties have not prevented Iraq from pursuing its path to democracy. All political forces active on the Iraqi scene stress the importance of taking part in the next general elections. The Independent High Electoral Commission is working tirelessly to conduct the elections on the scheduled date of 30 April. The Commission is intent on holding free, fair and constitutional elections under the oversight of international observers, as has been the case in the past three elections.

In that vein, based on our firm conviction of the important role that women can play in the prevention and settlement of conflicts and in peacebuilding and peacekeeping, we have launched a national plan for the period 2014 to 2018 pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Iraq has thereby become the first country in the Middle East and North African region to have launched such a plan.

Iraq continues to pursue a foreign policy based on common interests and non-interference in internal affairs, respect for international law and commitment to its obligations. Over the past few months, we have been able to strengthen cooperation with fraternal Kuwait to unprecedented levels. Many bilateral conventions have been signed, including in the areas of investment security and tourism. Iraq and Kuwait have also jointly deposited with the Secretary-General a bilateral

convention on joint administration of navigation in the Khor Abdallah waterway. Iraq continues to make tireless efforts to find the remains of missing Kuwaiti nationals as well as that country's national archives. We are resolutely striving to achieve tangible results on those two issues.

In addition to Iraq's success in restoring ties with the State of Kuwait, we have also been able to reach agreement with our neighbour the Islamic Republic of Iran on the demarcation of land and river borders in the Shatt Al-Arab region. Once we conclude an agreement, Iraq will have settled all outstanding border issues with neighbouring countries, thereby opening the way for developing ties and cooperation with all our neighbours in all areas. In that regard, we would like to welcome the decision by the Islamic Republic of Iran to grant amnesty to hundreds of its nationals from the Mojahedin-e-Khalq terrorist organization currently residing at Camp Hurriya in Baghdad and allow them to return to Iran. We call upon the international community to assist Iraq in relocating the remaining members of that terrorist organization to other countries and putting an end to their illegal presence in Iraq for more than two decades.

In conclusion, we highly value the efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq in providing advice and support to the Iraqi Government, particularly with regard to the comprehensive political dialogue among Iraqi factions and in providing technical assistance to guarantee that the parliamentary elections are free and fair. We would be remiss if we did not stress our appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Mladenov and his team for their dedication. We wish them further success in assisting Iraq.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.